

Established 1937

Illinois Valley News



Wednesday, January 12, 2005, 4 Sections, 24 Pages, Volume 67 No. 43 Cave Junction, Oregon 97523

Single Copy 50-cents



MOBILE HOME FIRE - Illinois Valley Fire District (IVFD) firefighters responded to an alarm at Space 22 at River Valley Village Mobile Home Park on Ollis Road in Cave Junction at approximately 6 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 11. No one was home at the single-wide dwelling. The major damage occurred in the living room, and there was smoke damage, said IVFD. Investigation was under way. Other details were unavailable in time for this issue.

Photos by Dale & Elaine Sandberg/IVFD photographers

I.V. Fire Plan final draft in works after last meeting

By CHRISTINA HILL
Correspondent

Illinois Valley seems to be a prime target when it comes to wildfires, and the damage can be greatly reduced or prevented with precautionary steps.

That's why, early last year, with memories of the 2002 Biscuit Fire still relatively fresh, the Illinois Valley Fire District (IVFD) retained the services of Tracy Katelman, of ForEverGreen Forestry, to help develop the Illinois Valley Fire Plan.

The final public meeting regarding this plan was held Tuesday evening, Jan. 4 at IVFD headquarters.

Katelman summarized the planning process that occurred during previous meetings. She welcomed meeting-goers to share comments on the rough draft of the fire plan.

According to Katelman, the final copy will be available March 1. Community involvement has been a major, necessary factor in its development, she said.

During the planning process, the Illinois Valley Fire Safe Council emerged. This volunteer-based council is comprised of valley residents interested in implementing the plan and encouraging fire-safe planning within the community.

In addition, De Spellmen, a volunteer firefighter, was assigned the task of serving as fire-safe coordinator for the district. She has worked on the plan during the past several months, particularly in the area of conducting public meetings.

However, much work remains. In order for the plan to be adopted as a Community

Wildfire Protection Plan under the Healthy Forest Restoration Act, it must first be approved by four agencies: the IVFD board of directors, the Cave Junction City Council, the Josephine County Board of Commissioners, and the Oregon Dept. of Forestry.

The plan includes seven communities federally designated as communities at risk of fire within Illinois Valley. They are Selma, Kerby, Cave Junction, O'Brien, Holland, Takilma, and Sun Star.

This plan is based on the outcome of meetings, one held in each community. At each meeting, community members were asked to identify areas at risk.

They were then asked to identify water sources, evacuation routes, homes or "values," risks, hazards, safe zones, and fuel reduction projects.

What they ended up with is a plan that as a rough draft contains 157 pages in nine chapters and numerous figures, maps and tables.

This plan, if adopted, is intended to be one that valley residents can refer to for fire safety.

In Selma, residents agreed that they need more fire safety education, evacuation routes with signs, fuel reduction (thinning of brush) in several areas, more water storage and more paid firefighters among other items.

Kerby residents want water in the Kerby Ditch again, so that they would be able to have hydrants. They would also like to see fire hazards reduced on Holton Creek Road.

Cave Junction had a long

(Continued on page 3)



CRASH INTERRUPTS ELECTRICITY - A pickup truck driven by Jeffrey J. Barry, 48, (address unavailable) crashed into a utility pole and caught fire on Holland Loop at Hummingbird Lane Monday, Jan. 10 at approximately 1 p.m., said Josephine County Sheriff's Office (JCSO). He was cited on charges of DUII, with a blood alcohol content of 0.17 percent, said JCSO, as well as hit-and-run, and driving while suspended. Power to numerous homes in the Holland Loop/Dick George area was out for more than six hours while Pacific Power replaced a pole and lines. The pickup is owned by Dyarla Jean Burns, 37, said JCSO. Illinois Valley Fire District, American Medical Response, and Josephine County Public Works assisted at the scene. Barry was located at a nearby residence after the crash, said JCSO.



Pomeroy Park plan concerns raised

Residents near the planned 59-lot Pomeroy Park subdivision raised issues Monday night, Jan. 10 including "nighttime light pollution" and public access to Illinois River.

Cave Junction city councilmen, meeting in city hall, devoted more than an hour to presentations, a public hearing and discussion before continuing the matter to Monday, Jan. 24.

The 39-acre residential development originally was proposed by Elton H. Frank and Mike Murphy. City Recorder Jim Polk said Monday evening that the latest paperwork shows the property owner as the Elton H. & Rayma Frank Trust.

Besides letters from Paco Despacio, Shahoma McAlister and Prasad

Boudreaux, and Viola K. Brumbaugh listing several concerns should the subdivision application be approved, several persons added their concerns during the meeting.

There were approximately six speakers including Despacio, Kayla Starr, Barry Snitkin and Meadow Martell. They live on Daisy Hill Road, a short distance from the planned project bordering Illinois River's south and west sides, according to the application.

Fears about sewage overflow and "nighttime light pollution" were allayed by Gary Biggs, city public works supervisor. He explained that the needed pump station will be a state-of-the-art device with back-up operating and power sys-

tems and alarms meeting mandatory requirements of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Oregon Dept. of Environmental Quality.

Regarding concerns about "unshielded street lights" that would "destroy the nighttime views of the stars," Biggs said that angled, low-level, less-intrusive sodium vapor lights are planned.

Besides those concerns, the issues of public access and "trashing the beach area" were raised. In addition, Illinois Valley Fire District has misgivings about only one road serving the 59 residents who would live in the subdivision.

Fire Marshal Jerry

(Continued on page 2)



PLENTY OF SNOW - A massive snowstorm struck Southwestern Oregon and Northern California last week, wreaking havoc with roadways and power lines. However, there were still fun times for some, as for these folks at Kerby Trailer Park. Pacific Power said that approximately 12,000 customers, including many in Illinois Valley, were temporarily without electricity. Crews worked around-the-clock restoring power by no later than Tuesday morning Jan. 11. (Photo by Dale Sandberg)